

Their Counter-Proclamation.

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yet name us, or uther Princeis, hot with honour and reverence ; eitherwayis it will nocht be sufferit." To trench on politics in the pulpit might in ordinary circumstances be an intolerable and unwarrantable stretch of the preacher's prerogative. In times when the pulpit took the place of the modern press, when politics and Protestantism were drawn into a common vortex, the preacher might be excused for improving his opportunity to inveigh against the sinister purposes of the persecutor, even if the persecutor were the queen regent herself. If "civill policie and publict governance " sent men to the stake for their religious opinions, John Knox and his fellow-preachers were amply justified in thundering defiance to the throne in the pulpit as well as out of it. They were, in fact, serving a more useful function in so doing than in professing the impossible policy of eschewing interference with "the authoritie."

The presence of the French soldiers in increasing numbers rallied a large number of the nobility to the banner of the Congregation. The Duke of Chatelherault and his son the Earl of Arran—the prospective successors to the throne—to whom political and personal motives were the chief incentives, ranged themselves on the side of Lord James and Knox. With their adhesion the political factors in the rebellion became predominant, as appears from the counter-proclamation "to the Nobilitie, Burghes, and Communitie of Scotland," issued in name of "the Lordis, Barones, and otheris, Bretherin of the Christian Congregation." The burden of this complaint is the oppression of the commonweal by strangers and the infraction of its ancient laws and liberties. It is against secular rather than religious abuses that these men inveigh with such heat of patriotic rhetoric—against crushing taxation, against the base coin that has demoralised all industry, against the maintenance of a foreign army for the subjugation of a free State. "If it be sedition . . . to cry for redress of thir enormyties, then indeed can nane of us be purgeit of that cryme, for as in verry hart we dampne sich inhumayne creweltie, with the wicked and craftie pretence thair of, sua can we, nor dar we . . . by keiping of silence justifie the same/' Many of these lords might be self-seeking politicians (the weathercock Chatelherault, with Elizabeth's hand in prospect